

South Carolina Department of Insurance

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South Carolina Department of Insurance Announces Safe Home Grant Awards

Scott H. Richardson, Director of the South Carolina Department of Insurance Department and Chairman of the Advisory Committee for the South Carolina Building Codes Council, announced today the first awards of the SC Safe Home Grant Program. "We are pleased to announce these awards and commend these homeowners in their efforts to strengthen their homes and be better prepared against the damaging effects of hurricane force winds. We have all seen the damage that these natural disasters can cause and encourage homeowners to take the necessary steps to protect their property," said Director Richardson.

Fourteen homeowners were awarded grants of up to \$5,000 each to help strengthen their homes against the high winds associated with hurricanes and other natural disasters. Of the grant recipients, seven are located in Berkely County, three in Charleston County, three in Horry County, and one in Dorchester County.

The SC Safe Home Grant Program was established this past June as a part of the Omnibus Insurance Reform Act of 2007. The Program, administered by the South Carolina Department of Insurance, provides opportunities for families to increase the safety of their homes against the high winds associated with hurricanes and severe storms.

Retrofitted or strengthened homes are less vulnerable to the effects of severe storms, thereby rendering storm damage less likely and less extreme. Fewer damages result in fewer or lower insurance claims and will ultimately reduce insurance premiums for all South Carolinians.

Homeowners can apply for the program to receive funds up to \$5000 to make specific mitigation improvements as recommended by a SC Safe Home Certified Wind Inspector. During the pilot phase of the SC Safe Home Grant Program are awarded on a first come first serve basis focusing on those areas that are most vulnerable to the effects of hurricane damaging winds.

Go to the South Carolina Safe Home website at <u>www.SCSafeHome.com</u> or call 803-737-6117 for SC Safe Home Grant Applications or additional information.

For questions concerning this information, please contact Ann Roberson, Public Information Officer, at 803-737-6207.